

THE FIVE CENT

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HUGO, THE TEXAN: Or, The Demons of the Alamo. By J. R. SCOTT.



But now the enemy hurled themselves forward, and they were immediately at too close quarters for rifle-shooting. Hugo and Red Spear clubbed their rifles and drew their knives—those terrible-looking butcher-knives invented by Colonel Bowie, and named for him “the bowie-knife.”

HUGO, THE TEXAN;

OR,

The Demons of the Alamo.

A Tale of the Lone Star State in Davy Crockett's Days.

By J. R. SCOTT,

Author of "Smokestack Bob," "Oath-Bound," Etc., Etc.

CHAPTER I.

HUGO THE TEXAN—THE ORDEAL OF FIRE.

THE San Antonio river flows through the most fertile, and beautiful portions of Texas.

Upon the banks of this stream, in the year 1836, a few adventurous Americans, mostly from the Southern or Gulf States, had established themselves with their families.

At this date Mexico still claimed Texas as a portion of the Spanish possessions in America, but the Mexican government, by its colonization laws, invited the Anglo-American population of Texas to colonize its wilderness under the pledged faith of a written constitution, that they should continue to enjoy that liberty, and republican government, to which they had been habituated in the land of their birth, the United States of America.

The Mexicans had now broken faith with the Americans.

General Santa Anna, having overturned the constitution of the Mexican government, now offered the American settlers of Texas the cruel alternative, either to abandon their homes acquired by so many privations, or submit to the most intolerable of all tyranny, the combined despotism of the sword and priesthood.

This the gallant American settlers of Texas had refused to do, and General Sam Houston, Colonels Travis, Bowie, "the Knife King," Fanning, and Davy Crockett, who, disgusted with the turn political affairs had taken at home, had journeyed to Texas, with the avowed intention of taking a part in the struggle for Texan independence—were the leaders of the American forces.

The struggle for the freedom of the "Lone Star State," was at its height, at the time of which we are writing, in the year 1836.

In December of the preceding year, General Burlinson, in command of the Texan forces, had captured the town of San Antonio, on the river of the same name, and situated at a distance of about one hundred and forty miles from the coast.

The Mexican forces in the town numbered seventeen hundred men, while the Texan forces consisted of but two hundred and sixteen.

The Mexicans had walked up the streets leading to the public square, intending to make a desperate resistance; the Texans, however, made an entrance, and valiantly drove them from house to house, until General Cos, the Mexican commander, retreated to the fortress of *Alamo*, without the city, and there hoisted the white flag.

This defeat rankled in the breasts of the Mexicans, and Santa Anna, the commander of the Mexicans, vowed to retake the Alamo, and exterminate its brave American defenders.

With this brief statement of the condition of affairs in Texas, at the time of our story, we will proceed with the relation of the thrilling narrative we have undertaken.

As the red sun sank into the mysterious "beyond," called by the red men, quite poetically, the "sunset land," a tall and stately red warrior of the Comanche tribe crept out from a growth of timber, upon a bank of the San Antonio river, and glided through the tall grass of a great flowery prairie, that glowed in the last light of the departing sun, like an emerald plain set with countless gems of every hue and variety of color.

The savage was stealthily making his way toward a camp fire.

This fire was situated near the central part of the broad sweep of open prairie, which was almost forest bound.

A strange group was assembled about the fire.

There were eight fierce-looking Mexican Jarocho, or guerrillas, irregular troops in warfare, an old man attired in the hunting-shirt, legging-moccasins, and cape of a Texan ranger, and a young and very beautiful girl, not more than sixteen or seventeen years of age, whose blonde beauty proclaimed she sprang from pure Anglo-American stock, untainted by the blood of Mexican, Spaniard, or the red race.

The old Texan ranger was bound to a stake, and while two of the Mexicans kept a close watch over the young girl, the others were engaged in torturing the old patriot.

The wretches had stripped to the waist the powerfully-framed old man who was still as hale, hearty, and muscular as most young men in their prime.

The Jarochos, ever remarkable for their cruelty to a prisoner, had affixed bundles of flaming fagots to the end of the long lances with which each of them was provided, and they were thrusting them against the naked flesh of the ranger.

Not a sound escaped him to indicate pain.

The young girl, with clasped hands, implored the old man's fiendish captors to desist.

"Spare him! For God's sake do not torture him to death. I am sure Hugo knows nothing of the military affairs of the patriot forces. He is not, as you suspect, a spy. My uncle, Paul Davrill, engaged him to conduct me from Goliad to his—my uncle's, home on the San Antonio, to 'Wild-horse Rancho' as the place is called," said the young girl.

One of the Mexicans laughed sneeringly.

"I do not believe you, Miss Dolores Davrill," he began, when the girl interrupted him by exclaiming:

"Good heavens, he knows my name!"

"Yes, my fair American senorita, and if you will take a good look at my face perhaps you may remember me," the man said, thrusting his face forward toward that of the girl in a most insolent manner.

Dolores Davrill regarded him for a moment with an earnest, intense glance.

Then in a clear, resonant voice she said:

"I do know you now; you are the servant of the Mexican gallant who dared to persecute me with his attentions and professions, while I resided in Goliad with my widowed mother who is now deceased."

"You are right, my lady, you looked not with favor upon the suit of my master, but his hour is coming, and my master never gives over the pursuit of beauty."

"What do you mean?"

"That I am commissioned to carry you to General Santa Anna."

"General Santa Anna!"

"Yes, at last you know the truth. The gallant who pursued you in Goliad before the outbreak of the war between Mexico and the Americans of Texas, was General Santa Anna, commander-in-chief of the troops of Mexico."

"Then I have little to hope for!" cried the girl, and a frightened, hunted look came into her starry eyes. She knew Santa Anna's reputation as a profligate.

"But this man, this *monster*, Santa Anna, where is he?" she asked.

"He is by this time on the banks of the Neuces and in a few days he will reach San Antonio, and the accursed Americans who occupy the town of San Antonio and the fortress of the Alamo will be exterminated."

"God help the poor settlers of Texas who fall in his way to the Alamo," said Dolores.

The Mexican heeded her not.

"My spies have informed me that your guide, known as *Hugo the Texan*, carries upon his person an important dispatch from Colonel Fanning, of Goliad, to Colonel Bowie,

the accursed man of the knife, who is in command of the Texan forces in the Alamo. This message I am determined to possess, and I *shall* possess it. The ranger has concealed it, but we will burn the secret out of him or *we will burn him to death*," said the Mexican Guerrilla. He fairly hissed the last words and he flashed upon the noble-looking old ranger a look of fierce hatred that told he meant to carry his fearful threat into execution.

The Texan ranger, as he heard the Mexican's threat, set his teeth tightly, and his strongly-marked and rough features were lighted up as it seemed by the light of a noble resolve that flashed from his keen, gray eyes.

"You kin kill old Hugo if you will, greasers, fer ye have him on the hip this time sartin sure. You kin kill me, I say, but ye will never make me acknowledge that I know anything about dispatches. You infernal sarpsents ain't half human, er I'd ax yer what yer mean to carry the young gal who was intrusted to my care away to that old skunk, Santa Anna, fer," Hugo the Texan said.

The man was a character in his way, and he was one of Sam Houston's—the great border fighter—most daring and cunning scouts.

The old man no doubt had another name, but he was universally called, simply Hugo, or "Hugo the Texan," and thus we shall designate him.

"It matters not to you, old man, what object I or my master may have in making the girl a captive. Suffice it, for your mystification, for me to say that neither she nor you would ever guess the object."

"Some deviltry I'll be bound," retorted Hugo.

The Mexicans had, for a few moments, ceased torturing the ranger.

The sun had now sunk well to its bed in the sea.

The gloaming had come, and the strange, fantastically attired Mexicans, with their torches fixed to the ends of their lances, the herculean prisoner at the stake, and the angelic girl crouching near, formed a strange and thrilling picture—one that spoke of a tragedy about to be enacted.

The leader of the Mexicans now thrust the flaming torch at the end of his lance near the old ranger's face.

"Will you speak? Will you tell what you have done with the dispatch?" he hissed.

"No. Never! If I carried a hundred dispatches I'd never betray my trust to a cur of a greaser!" was the answer.

"Then you die!" retorted the Mexican.

CHAPTER II.

CLOSE QUARTERS—DEAF SMITH, GENERAL SAM HOUSTON'S SPEECHLESS SPY—A TERRIBLE BLOW WITH A BOWIE-KNIFE.

"At him! Burn the accursed Americano!" shrieked the enraged Mexican.

As he spoke he dashed the blazing end of his spear into the old ranger's face.

The other seven Mexicans dashed at the brave old American, to whom honor and the welfare of the State of his adoption was dearer than his life.

Thus in a moment eight burning torches came in contact with his flesh.

The torture was terrible, and a shriek burst from his lips.

At the same moment, as if in answer to his cry, or as its echo, a wild war-whoop, the yell of the Comanche Indians, rang out near at hand, and the horses of the Mexicans, which were tethered upon the prairie just beyond the bright circle of the camp fire, stampeded in terror.

"The horses!" shouted the leader of the Mexican scouting party.

"The Indians!" cried another.

In a moment they were in pursuit of their animals.

Hugo and the girl were left alone.

The Mexicans feared not that the girl would escape, for they reasoned that she would not attempt to make her way over the prairie alone.

As to Hugo, they fancied that the torture he had undergone had deprived him of his strength to such an extent that he could not go far, and as he was without arms, even if the girl released him he would not escape.

It was with these thoughts, mingled with fear of the savages whose war-whoop had startled them, that the Mexicans continued the pursuit of their horses.

Scarcely were they gone when the tall and stately Comanche warrior whom we saw gliding through the tall grass towards the camp of the Mexicans arose to his feet close beside Hugo.

"Red Spear!" exclaimed Hugo.

"Ugh!" answered the Indian.

Then with a few strokes of his knife he liberated the old ranger.

Dolores Davrill sprang to his side.

"Thank God, you are free!" she cried.

"Come," said the red warrior laconically.

Hugo took Dolores' hand, and while the Comanche led the way, the three hastened onward in the direction of the San Antonio river and "Wild-horse Rancho," the home of the young girl's uncle.

This was the direction from whence the Indian had come.

Reaching the timber from whence the Indian had come, Red Spear the Comanche led the way to a thicket in which a powerful black mustang, which he had ridden to that point, was secured.

"White gal ride hoss!" the Comanche said.

"Yes, you ride, Dolores," said the old ranger, to whom Dolores had looked inquiringly, when the Indian proposed that she should mount his horse.

He assisted the girl to the bare back of the mustang.

Then they pressed onward.

In a very few moments they emerged from the belt of timber upon a flowery prairie again.

Then they heard sounds of pursuit.

"The Mexicans have recovered their well-trained horses, chief, and they are after us. I reckon we'll have to have a brush with 'em," said Hugo.

"Then take gun!" said the Indian, and he pointed to a second rifle besides the one which he carried in his hand, and which was strapped on his back.

Hugo unstrapped it.

The gun was a Mexican musket.

"Me shoot greaser, take gun!" grunted the Comanche.

They were now in the tall prairie-grass.

Red Spear touched the black mustang upon the fore knee, and the excellently trained animal sank down upon his knees.

Dolores alighted.

"You keep close beside me, Dolores," said Hugo, taking the fair girl's hand.

Then he sank down in the grass and the Comanche did the same.

As the Mexicans came dashing up, Hugo and the Indian took deliberate aim.

Simultaneously they discharged their weapons.

Then they fell flat upon the ground, and, crawling away, reloaded their guns.

At their second discharge the Mexicans fled.

Three saddles were empty, but the horses ridden by the men who had fallen beneath the ranger and his red friend's bullets fled with the others.

Then Hugo and Dolores, guided by the Indian, who was even more familiar with the route than they, pressed on. The ranger told the Indian how he had been surprised by a large band of Mexicans, of which the party from whom he had escaped was but a small division.

Red Spear had a thrilling communication to make.

Santa Anna had already crossed the Neches with his army, and his followers were committing the most terrible barbarities upon the settlers along his route.

The Spaniard's track was marked by death and desolation.

The sword, fire and famine were in his train, and neither age nor sex found mercy.

The disheveled tresses of the mother, the golden curls of the infant, and the silvered head of the grand-sire were alike stained with gore.

Farm-houses were destroyed by fire, as were the crops in the field; and everywhere the settlers were fleeing for their lives.

Like Attila, the fiendish Santa Anna moved on—a demon of destruction—with his devilish followers, the men who were soon to become the "demons of the Alamo."

This was the substance of Red Spear's communication.

"By the gods, my blood boils, and I long to open fire on the greasers. But now I think of it, 'Wild-horse Ranch' is on the route that the Mexicans are marching over to reach the town of San Antonio, or Bexar, as it is sometimes called. It may be that they will arrive there before we do, chief. Let us make all haste, that we may warn the ranch-men of the peril that awaits them," said Hugo.

"Come—quick!" assented the Indian, quickening his pace.

"Heaven grant we may arrive in time to warn my uncle," murmured Dolores.

The Indian known as Red Spear was one of General Sam Houston's scouts, as Hugo also was.

They were old acquaintances and firm friends, who had fought side by side in more than one fierce conflict.

"You got dispatch, eh?" queried the Indian.

"Yes, *sir*!" replied Hugo, with a chuckle. "Though the durned skunks blistered my hide pretty bad, and tried their durndest to make me, I didn't let 'em see the docky ments."

"Where hide 'em?" asked the red warrior, casting upon the old ranger a look that expressed admiration of his courage.

"Here," said the scout, and as he spoke he extended his right arm.

There was a long, deep cut in the fleshy part above his elbow.

"The dispatch, inclosed in a hollow silver bullet that screws together in the middle, is in my arm," Hugo said.

"Then you are a spy. You do know of the military affairs of the patriots, and I protested you did not. Why did you fear to trust me?" asked Dolores.

"Because it was my duty to trust no one with my secret," answered the ranger, quietly.

The night was not far advanced when the ranger, with the young girl intrusted to his care, and the Indian, arrived at a deserted ranch not more than ten miles from their destination.

As they reached it a chorus of yells burst upon the silence, and from the coppice beyond appeared a swarm of Mexicans.

They were the convicts, assassins, and worse, belonging to Santa Anna's guerrillas, for the prisons of Mexico had been emptied to recruit the Mexican raider's army of destruction.

"There is but one hope—the ranch!" shouted the ranger.

He caught the black mustang by the bridle and sprang forward.

He burst open the door of the ranch—a small log-building—and the black mustang upon which Dolores was mounted dashed in, closely followed by Red Spear, the Comanche warrior.

In a moment the ranger and the Indian closed the door, and barricaded it with some half-consumed logs from the fire-place, and the oaken bar which the original occupants of the place had provided to shut out less dangerous savages before the struggle for Texan independence began.

But the barrier was frail for all that, and a moment or so later the Mexicans dashed it down.

They had used a log as a battering-ram for this purpose.

When Hugo entered the deserted ranch he observed a large hole in the roof, but he thought not of utilizing it in any way.

When the Mexican demons entered, a moment of inaction followed.

Against the rear wall of the ranch stood Hugo and the Comanche warrior.

Each leveled his rifle at the foe.

Behind them, half dead with fear, crouched Dolores Davrill.

The resolute attitude and evident desperation of the men whom they had driven into the deserted ranch held the cowardly Mexican assassins for a moment.

It was a foregone conclusion that some of their number would meet their death before the two men—splendid representatives of the physical perfections and daring of the two races, the white and the red—succumbed to them.

In situations of this kind even brave men hesitate.

No one seeks to sacrifice his own life by being the first

to hurl himself upon a foe who holds at least *one* life in his hand.

But the Mexicans did not pause very long, as those in the rear pushed the front ranks forward whether they would or not.

Two burly Mexicans, with fierce, snarling oaths, uttered in their native language, hurled themselves upon the two devoted men whose lives they sought.

"Give it to 'em, chief!" cried Hugo.

"Bang! bang!"

Both the ranger and the Comanche fired, and both shots did fatal execution, for two men fell.

But now the enemy hurled themselves forward, and they were immediately at too close quarters for rifle-shooting.

Hugo and Red Spear clubbed their rifles and drew their knives—those terrible-looking butcher-knives invented by Colonel Bowie, and named for him "*the bowie-knife*."

They had not the slightest hope of escape now, but they meant to turn that deserted ranch into a place of slaughter before they fell.

Suddenly, however, a dark form shot down through the hole in the roof, and with one terrific blow of a bowie-knife, the man who had dropped from the roof almost severed a Mexican's head from his body.

"Deaf Smith!" shouted Hugo, recognizing the man.

CHAPTER III.

DEAF SMITH, THE SPEECHLESS SPY—DAVY CROCKETT AND JACK THIMBLERIG—FOUND HUNG BY THE NECK.

THE man who had so suddenly and in so remarkable a manner gained an entrance to the ranch building, was one of the most mysterious and unique characters in American history.

He was a tall, raw-boned man, as dark as an Indian, with an intelligent but melancholy face, that caused one to think that he had experienced much mental suffering.

This man was attached to General Sam Houston's Texan Rangers, and, although he claimed to be both *deaf and dumb*—that he could neither hear nor speak—he was the most remarkable spy the history of border warfare gives any account of.

So remarkable was his marksmanship that his name was a terror to the Mexicans, who regarded him as the most fatal sharpshooter among the American forces.

The deaf spy knew not what fear was.

The history of Deaf Smith is shrouded in obscurity.

Little is known of him more than that he appeared as a scout in Texas some time previous to the commencement of the struggle for the independence of the "Lone Star State."

As an Indian-fighter and a terrible antagonist in personal encounters, Deaf Smith had acquired a reputation throughout the south-western border before he became General Houston's wonderful "speechless" spy.

The sudden appearance of Deaf Smith was greeted by a chorus of howls from the Mexicans, and as he nearly decapitated the man whom he had struck with his bowie-knife, the cowardly followers of Santa Anna recoiled.

Then there came a ringing shout, and a powerful-looking man, clad in the costume of a trapper, with a bearskin cap

upon his head, and his long rifle in his hand, dropped down through the roof beside the deaf spy.

"Davy Crockett!"

"Big Bear-killer!"

Hugo the Texan spoke first.

Red Spear called the border Congressman by the cognomen by which he was known among the red men.

"Yes, as old Hickory Jackson used to say, we are here *unanimously*. Come on, pilgrims, shower down on these greasers like a rain of 'tarnal extermination. *Ker Whoop*."

Davy Crockett, the bear-hunter and Indian-fighter as well as congressman, with a yell bounded at the Mexicans.

Deaf Smith, Hugo, and the Comanche warrior also charged their enemies.

At the same time, one after another, ten border men, armed to the teeth, came down through the roof.

The Mexicans were driven from the ranch building, and the Texans pursued them as they fled to the adjacent copice.

When this shelter was reached the Mexicans separated.

This rendered pursuit ineffectual, and the Texans abandoned it.

All save one of the new arrivals had hastened in pursuit of the retreating Mexicans.

The one man who remained behind was a stalwart young man, but at the same time his figure was light and graceful.

He was attired in a hunting-shirt, tastily ornamented; and his Indian leggings were beaded and worked beautifully in the Comanche style.

This young man, the moment his eyes fell upon the young girl, Dolores Davrill, sprang to her side; while she extended both hands as she cried:

"Edward Marston!"

"Yes, it is I, my own," he replied.

They were affianced, and he embraced the girl affectionately.

Edward Marston was the son of Paul Davrill's nearest neighbor, and Dolores and he had been engaged for some time.

They were to have been married a few weeks previous, but Edward had been called to join his company of rangers, and take a part in the struggle for the freedom of the state.

"I learned from your uncle that you were en route for Wild-horse Rancho, and as I knew that roving bands of Mexican guerrillas—Santa Anna's advance guards, were everywhere, I undertook to come forward with some of the men of the scouting party to which I belong, to meet you," said young Marston.

"It is well that you did so as you see, but whence came those *great men*?" asked the girl.

"You mean Deaf Smith and Davy Crockett?"

"Yes."

"We encountered them, and *Jack Thimble-erig*—the man with the big white hat, whom you may have noticed among those who entered this building with me. They were on their way to San Antonio, but they gladly took a part with us in surprising the Mexicans," said Marston.

"But how did you all gain the roof undiscovered?"

"That was an easy matter, for it is pretty dark, although there is a moon, for the sky is cloudy. A great tree

stretches its garland branches over the roof of the ranch building."

"I comprehend how you proceeded—you gained the roof unseen by the Mexicans by means of the tree?"

"Yes."

Then Dolores told the story of her own, and Hugo the Texan's capture and escape.

"I believe that Santa Anna, prompted by some motive, the nature of which I cannot guess, if I credit the statement of his emissary, the leader of the band by whom I was captured is bent upon making me a prisoner," said Dolores, when all had been related.

"The words of the Mexican when he stated that you would never guess the object Santa Anna had in desiring to make you a prisoner, are indeed intended to mystify, and you know I had hitherto supposed that the Mexican profligate was bent upon making you his; for I suspected the identity of the mysterious gallant who persecuted you with his unwelcome attentions," said Marston.

"Well, well, I am safe now, and God grant I may never fall into the power of the Mexican chief," Dolores replied.

"I say Amen to that," Marston earnestly remarked.

The young lovers continued to converse until the Texans returned from the pursuit of the Mexicans.

When Hugo and Red Spear informed Marston and the others that the main force of the Mexicans had already crossed the Neuces, Davy Crockett exclaimed:

"Then there is no safety for the settlers this side of the town of San Antonio, and the fortress of the Alamo."

"That's so," assented Hugo.

"Wild-horse Rancho is on the route of the invader. Come, let us push on and warn Paul Davrill, that he may proceed with us to San Antonio," Marston advised.

San Antonio was the destination of Davy Crockett, Thimble-erig and Red Spear, as well as Marston's rangers, who meant to reinforce Colonel Bowie's command at the Alamo—or fortress of San Antonio.

Without further delay the party set out for the ranch of Dolores Davrill's uncle.

Deaf Smith, Red Spear and Hugo the Texan, formed the rear guard of the party.

Davy Crockett and Jack Thimble-erig—a Mississippi gambler and desperado, but a man of courage—whom Crockett had brought with him to Texas, led the van.

In this order the march was made, Dolores and Marston with the body of his little band of rangers marching between their watchful friend in the front and rear.

Before dawn they reached the site of "Wild-horse Ranch"—*site*, we say, for the ranch was no more.

The Mexicans had been there—some straggling band, presumably, had but recently left the ranch, leaving behind a smoking heap of ruins, and the mangled bodies of the people of the ranch.

From the limb of a tree the body of Paul Davrill hung suspended by the neck.

In a moment Davy Crockett had cut him down, and the next instant the bear-hunter and Indian-fighter uttered a shout.

"By Gum, the man ain't dead by a long chalk!" he cried. Such proved to be the fact.

Paul Davrill had not received his death at the hands of

the Mexicans, for his neck had not been broken, and he was only insensible by reason of the asphyxia attendant upon prolonged strangulation.

His resuscitation was accomplished.

As soon as he could speak coherently he related his story, which was one of horror.

He told how a band of Mexican cut-throats had surprised the ranch, and inhumanly butchered all its inhabitants, men, women, and children.

"I am a childless old bachelor, and none of my kin were slain, thanks to Dolores' providential absence, but I have lost those who had been for years in my service, and I long to avenge them," said Davrill.

Then later, as the party was on the march for San Antonio, Paul Davrill said to Dolores when no one else was near to hear:

"You remember Dr. Angelo Peterio, the Spanish physician, of Santa Fe."

"Yes, sir," assented Dolores.

"Very well, you must recollect that he was a learned man, skilled in chemistry and medicine, but by many persons believed to be insane."

"I remember all about him, because of the trouble you had with him about a valuable 'range' of land, owned by yourself, but to which the doctor laid claim under an old Spanish land grant, the validity of which he failed to establish, and was therefore obliged to surrender the land to you."

"Very true. At that time Peterio swore vengeance upon me and mine, and to-night he was with the band who came to destroy my home. He asked for you, Dolores, and when I told him that you were not at the ranch he would not believe me. He searched for you everywhere. Then failing to find any trace of you, but still believing you to be secreted about the ranch, he promised to spare my life if I would reveal where you were hidden. I refused. Then they hung me, but before I became unconscious they offered to spare my life if I would produce you," said Davrill.

"Perhaps Peterio was sent by Santa Anna," replied Dolores.

Before Paul Davrill could answer a most startling interruption occurred.

A volley of rifle shots was discharged from ahead.

This volley was promptly returned by the rangers advance guard.

CHAPTER IV.

SANTA ANNA'S ADVANCE GUARD—A RUNNING BATTLE WITHIN THE ALAMO—COL. BOWIE—THE CAPTURE OF DOLOROS.

THE Texans had encountered a band of the enemy.

They were deployed along the river bank, down which the rangers were marching.

The unerring marksmanship of the rangers soon caused this band of stragglers to fall back.

They continued, nevertheless, to harass the march of Hugo and his friends all the way to San Antonio.

Finally, in the gray of the morning, the rangers saw the independent flag flying over the battlements of the fortress of Alamo, their destination.

The Mexicans now fell back and beat a hasty retreat, for

the main body of Santa Anna's army of invasion was yet on the banks of the Neuces, and the parties who were ravaging the country were only his irregular guerrillas.

The rangers rode up to the gates of the fortress, and were received with glad shouts when they had made themselves known to the sentinel.

The gates were thrown open and the party entered the town.

Dolores was provided with a comfortable boarding-house, kept by a Mrs. Dickinson, afterwards celebrated as one of *two* survivors of the most brutal massacres recorded in the history of civilized warfare.

The gallant young Colonel Travis was really in command of the Texan forces of the Alamo, although Colonel Bowie was his associate and adviser, and to the latter the men looked with greatest confidence and respect.

The garrison barely numbered one hundred and fifty efficient men.

Colonel Bowie was one of the first to welcome Davy Crockett and his companions, and to him Hugo delivered the dispatch, written on a tiny bit of paper and secreted in the hollow silver bullet which was hidden in his flesh.

Red Spear communicated the information that Santa Anna was advancing, and that he had already crossed the Neuces.

This intelligence filled Colonel Bowie with apprehension but he concealed his feelings.

The dispatch he had received stated that Colonel Fanning, who, with a small force, held the town of Goliad, could not march to his (Bowie's) aid until supplies, daily expected, arrived.

"I feel a premonition that those supplies will never reach Colonel Fanning. I fear the train has been cut off and captured by the Mexican guerrillas. And now Santa Anna, with his horde of merciless ruffians, is marching upon us. God keep the garrison of the Alamo if Colonel Fanning fails us."

These were the thoughts that formed themselves in the mind of the inventor of the terrible bowie-knife, but he made no sign of what was passing in his mind.

Colonel Bowie was a native of Louisiana, and he had probably participated in more desperate personal conflicts than any other man in the world.

"Be sure you're right, colonel, then go ahead. That's been my motto through life so far, and I will say it's carried me along right well," said Davy Crockett, shaking hands with Bowie.

"An excellent motto, colonel; and with a thousand such men as you, Deaf Smith, Hugo, and the Comanche, I could march to the City of Mexico, and capture it in three months," said Bowie.

The next day Red Spear, Deaf Smith and Hugo started out on a scout.

They meant to reconnoiter the enemy.

They were absent all day, but they re-entered the fortress during the night, and reported.

They had met a band of Comanches on the Rio Frio River.

These Indians were friendly, and from them Red Spear gained the information that Santa Anna was already on the march from the Neuces.

"Then the Mexicans will arrive before San Antonio very soon—eh, colonel?" said Davy Crockett, who was present when Red Spear made his report.

"Undoubtedly they will be here in a few days," was Colonel Travis' answer.

"Well, all we can do is to be sure we are right, and go ahead. But, by Jingo, I wish Fanning would put in an appearance."

"And I, for not only do we need the reinforcement of his command, but our provisions are running short."

"Candidly, colonel, between you and I there is not the slightest chance that we can defend this post against the entire army of the Mexicans," said Davy Crockett, in a low, confidential voice.

"You are right, colonel. But we can fight to the last, and show the yellow greasers how white men can die."

"Aye, with their boots on."

"And their faces to the foe."

Edward Marston, of the Texan Rangers, knew full well the danger of the situation, but he cared not for himself.

No personal consideration could have caused him a tremor, for, like all those heroes, he was animated by the fervent patriotic spirit that said:

"Liberty or death!"

But for sweet Dolores Davrill's sake the young ranger feared.

The fact that Santa Anna and, perhaps, also the Spanish doctor, Angelo Peetrio, had some motive that made them desirous of gaining possession of the girl, was not the sole cause of her affianced's anxiety.

There were other considerations.

The young man knew that the Mexican soldiery, composed as it largely was of convicts and the dregs of the criminal classes of the Mexicans, were merciless, and that if Dolores fell into their clutches the worst might be expected.

"She shall die by my own hand before I will permit the fate I have in mind to overtake my future bride," vowed Edward.

Then he sought Dolores at the house of Mrs. Dickinson.

"Dolores, I do not wish to alarm you, but I am satisfied in my own mind that, unless Colonel Fanning speedily arrives with reinforcements, the Alamo and the town of San Antonio will fall into the hands of the enemy, for Red Spear informs me that Santa Anna's force numbers more than sixteen hundred men, according to the estimate of the Indians who gave the chief his information.

"I fear not for myself, my love, but I would devise some plan to secure your safety should the worst I apprehend really come to pass. I would secretly conduct you from this place," said Marston, when he was alone with Dolores.

"But *where* would you conduct me? Where would you leave me in safety? There is no safety in Texas now," said the girl.

"True, all is turmoil, danger and disorder, and human life and property is in danger everywhere in Texas. That I will admit; but among the red men—among the Comanches, Red Spear's people—you would be safe from the Mexicans, and at the command of the chief you would be kindly treated," said the young ranger.

Then they continued to converse for some time, and it was decided between themselves and Mr. Davrill, who was taken into their confidence, that Red Spear should be engaged to conduct Dolores to his people, a large band of whom had established a summer camp on the upper waters of the San Antonio.

This Red Spear consented to do.

That same night Dolores took a fond farewell of her uncle and lover.

The Comanche, accompanied by Deaf Smith and Dolores, left the fortress at midnight.

No one knew of their departure save the sentries and the commander.

The night was a dark one.

The Comanche, with the girl between him and the deaf spy, hurried along the western wall of the fortress.

Suddenly, and without the least warning, a score of dark forms arose out of the tall grass before them.

"The Mexicans!" screamed Dolores.

Such was the character of the men who confronted the girl's conductors.

But the next moment the deaf spy's rifle cracked, and scarcely an instant afterward Red Spear's weapon was discharged.

Both shots were fatal.

Two Mexicans sank upon the prairie, never more to rise again.

Then the survivors hurled themselves upon the two men who stood before the trembling girl whom they meant to protect with their own lives if need be.

A terrific combat ensued.

The Comanche fought with all the fury of a savage.

Deaf Smith waged a silent battle with his great bowie-knife.

But the enemy was all about them, and the fierce tide of combat swept them away from the girl.

Deaf Smith and the Indian did all in the power of brave men to protect Dolores, but they failed.

Dolores was lost to them.

A couple of hideous wretches, with red turbans bound about their brows, seized the girl and hurried her away in a direction opposite to that in which she was going when her escort was attacked.

Now, however, lights flashed upon the battlements of the Alamo, and the sentries gave the alarm.

It was known that Deaf Smith and Red Spear were without the fortress engaged in a desperate combat with an overwhelming force of Mexicans.

In a moment Davy Crockett, Colonel Bowie, and Edward Marston, at the head of a band of over thirty volunteers, charged through the gate of the Alamo, and dashed to the assistance of the two brave fellows without.

Would they reach them in time to save them?

CHAPTER V.

A FIERCE COMBAT—REINFORCEMENTS FROM THE ALAMO—DOLORES IN THE POWER OF THE SPANISH DOCTOR—A MANIAC'S HORRIBLE PLOT.

FIGHTING side by side, Deaf Smith and the Comanche

held the Mexicans away by the sheer force of almost super-human daring and prowess.

But they knew this could not long last. Indeed, the devoted pair were about exhausted, when the ringing voice of Hugo the Texan informed them that their friends had charged forth from the Alamo, and were coming to their assistance.

We say informed *them*; perhaps, we should have said, "informed Red Spear," because it was not possible for a deaf man to hear.

Yet Deaf Smith turned at the sound of Hugo's voice, precisely like one who *had heard* a welcome sound.

Could it be as some hinted that Deaf Smith was not really deaf, but that he only assumed so, the better to deceive his enemies. Was his deafness but a cunning ruse?

This question has never been clearly answered, and the secret was probably known to but two men, Smith himself and General Sam Houston.

The supposition that help in a considerable force was coming to the assistance of the two men, whom they had surprised, was sufficient to cause the Mexican guerrilla's to beat a precipitate retreat.

The men from the Alamo pursued them, but the Mexicans would not show fight.

An hour later, Red Spear, Hugo the Texan, Deaf Smith and Edward Marston, took leave of their friends in the fortress of the Alamo, and started upon the trail of Dolores Davrill's captors.

Red Spear had no less than *thirteen* Mexican scalps suspended by a buckskin thong about his waist and over his shoulders.

* * * * *

The following morning, not long after day had dawned, the camp of General Santa Anna on the Neuces river was astir.

Within his tent the Mexican chief, Santa Anna, sat conversing with a tall old Spaniard whose bloodless face was like a very death-head, but for the pair of flaming eyes that lit it up as with the fire of a couple of live coals.

The old man was slightly stooped-shouldered and his long, almost perfectly white hair fell upon his shoulders in an unkempt mass.

His beard was long, tangled, and unkempt, like his hair.

There was a great contrast between the dandyfied Mexican general and his aged companion.

"Yes, general," said the old Spaniard, resuming a conversation which the entrance of an orderly a moment before had interrupted, "I would recall to your mind the occurrences of a few months ago. You remember that at that time through the secret instrumentality of political enemies you were *poisoned*. You were dying."

"True," assented Santa Anna.

"You had been doomed by the verdict of all your physicians."

"Yes."

"Then you sent for me."

"I did, and be you mad or sane, you cured me. You saved my life, doctor Angelo Peterio."

"Aye, and upon what terms?"

"I remember them."

"What were they?"

"You anticipated the present war, and you made me swear that in case during the struggle which you saw impending a young girl whom you would not name fell into my power, I would surrender her in all her virgin innocence to you," said Santa Anna.

"That was our agreement, and now I ask you, will you keep it?" said Doctor Peterio.

"By all the saints, I will."

"That is well, for *the girl has just been brought* into camp. She will be brought into your presence in a few moments, and I desired to satisfy myself that you meant to keep faith with me, general," said the doctor.

This was the man who had sought Dolores at "Wild horse Ranch."

He it was who had vowed vengeance upon Paul Davrill, and it was by the Spanish physician's order that the ranchman had been hung.

Santa Anna did not dream that the girl whom he had promised to surrender to the doctor was Dolores Davrill, whom he had fallen passionately in love with while sojourning in Goliad in disguise before the outbreak of hostilities.

The man who led the party who captured Hugo and Dolores, and who made the mystifying statement about the object for which Santa Anna desired to capture the girl, had not been sent by Santa Anna as he represented, but he was the servant of the Spanish doctor, and he shared his master's secrets.

He knew the purpose for which the doctor required a virgin, and that he had selected Dolores that he might avenge himself on one of Davrill's hated race, and at the same time accomplish the object of another nature which he had in view.

Dr. Angelo Peterio was a man of undoubted talent, and he had received a collegiate education, but it was said that much study had made him mad.

It had long been whispered that the learned doctor was a monomaniac on the subject of chemistry and the discovery of remedies.

His servant was an ignorant fellow, and he firmly believed in everything his master told him.

It was evident from the strange words of the doctor's servant, who, by the way, was called Miguel, that there was some mystery—some profound secret—in the background, that made it necessary that the maniac doctor should possess the maiden.

"So the maiden has been captured, eh?" said General Santa Anna a moment later.

"Yes, as I said."

"I am curious to know why you are so deeply interested in making this girl a prisoner, doctor?"

"My interest is wholly of a scientific nature. The perfection of an invention, or more properly a discovery in chemistry requires that I should—but never mind, General; I will not weary you with the long explanation that would be necessary to make you comprehend clearly what I have in mind."

"As you will."

At that moment Miguel, Dr. Angelo Peterio's servant, appeared at the tent-door.

He gave the customary military salute.

"Ah, good Miguel, what now?" asked the doctor.

"Who is the man?" demanded Santa Anna.

"My servant, and the leader of a band of irregular cavalry."

The general bowed.

"Now tell me what you came to communicate," the Spanish doctor said.

"I came to say that the guards with the senorita await without."

"Very well," answered the doctor.

He turned to the general.

"Will you behold my captive?" he asked.

"Yes, I am curious to see her, and if she is beautiful, then despite your protestations of only a scientific interest in her, I shall suspect you of gallantry, my worthy disciple of Esculapius."

The doctor smiled curiously.

In his heart he felt no love for the arrogant officer.

The doctor knew that Santa Anna had sought to win the girl he held a captive, and it was for that reason that the wily old physician had not revealed her name.

"Since it is your pleasure, general, the girl shall be at once brought within the tent," said Doctor Peterio.

"Very well."

The doctor said to Miguel:

"Bring the girl into our presence."

"Yes, master."

With this Miguel turned and left the tent.

A moment later Dolores Davrill, looking pale and weary, but as lovely as a houri of a Mohammedan paradise, was conducted into the tent.

"Dolores Davrill!" exclaimed General Santa Anna.

Then he turned upon the doctor, and said:

"Look you, Angelo Peterio, I have promised myself to possess this girl, and I dreamt not that she it was you had in mind when you obtained my promise."

"Indeed!" quietly remarked the physician.

"Now, Peterio, what will you take to release me from my promise. What sum—in *gold*, mind—will induce you to surrender your fair captive to me?"

The doctor hesitated.

"Say five thousand Mexican dollars."

"No."

"Not enough? Then ten thousand."

"No, nor twenty, fifty, a *hundred* thousand. Not all the money you possess can buy that girl from me. Her race robbed me, and drove me from my land. Now I will tell you what I want of her.

"The perfection of a wondrous chemical compound which shall turn all base metals into gold—bright, gleaming gold—which I have spent years in perfecting, requires as one of its ingredients *the heart's blood of a young maiden*. Therefore will I sacrifice one of Davrill's hated race, and accomplish a work of vengeance, while at the same time the requirements of the chemical compound are satisfied.

"Oh, mighty power of Chemistry, I have conquered thee, and soon shall I have the world at my feet!" said the doctor.

If the general had ever doubted his insanity, he was now positive that the physician was a madman.

Faint with horror at the announcement of the fate in store for her, Dolores threw herself at Santa Anna's feet.

CHAPTER VI.

SANTA ANNA'S PROPOSITION—THE DISGUISED SCOUT—HUGO IN THE MEXICAN CAMP—THE FOUR SCOUTS—ON THE MARCH—A SURPRISE.

"SAVE me! Oh, save me from this inhuman monster," Dolores supplicated.

"Leave me alone for a few moments with your captive, doctor," said Santa Anna, concealing as well as he could the emotions which the appearance of Dolores and the terrible announcement made by Peterio had occasioned him.

The old physician regarded the Mexican general distrustfully.

With maniacal cunning, he suspected that Santa Anna was thinking of some plan to deprive him of his victim.

For this reason he hesitated about complying with Santa Anna's request.

The haughty Mexican general was not accustomed to having his orders questioned.

"Go, I say," he cried impatiently, and as the doctor reluctantly withdrew, he added: "You need have no fear that I will not restore the girl to you at the expiration of the brief time I desire to converse with her."

When the general's tent was deserted by all save Dolores, Davrill, and himself, the Mexican chief said:

"Arise, fair maiden. The man who has just quitted the tent is insane, and I have been unwillingly led to promise that he should have you to do with as he saw fit, but when I made the promise I neither suspected his terrible purpose nor your identity. I shall find a means of saving you, and at the same time the doctor shall be ignorant of my complicity in the matter, for I wish not to offend him. He is a most skillful physician, and I know not how soon I may have need of his services. But if I agree to save you from him, you must promise to look with favor on my suit. Will you promise this?"

Dolores was silent.

The alternative was to this pure, good girl one of the most trying nature.

At length she said:

"Save me and win my eternal gratitude. Life is very dear to me, and if you are generous in this, I shall think more kindly of you than I ever otherwise could."

With this evasive answer the Mexican general was at first not disposed to be satisfied.

"I shall have the girl in my power at all events, and I can be harsh if need be when the time comes; perhaps now I had better try to place myself in as favorable a light with her as possible," he reflected.

"I will save you, trusting that you will remember my kindness, and yet learn to love me, as I do you, my beautiful Americano," said the general.

Then he hurriedly explained the means by which he hoped to save Dolores from Doctor Peterio.

When all was arranged Santa Anna stepped to the tent door and signaled the doctor, who, with his servant Miguel, stood anxiously waiting near by.

"You can remove your prisoner now," said the general.

The doctor and Miguel hastened into the tent.

"Spare me—spare me! Oh, general, save me!" cried Dolores, in a voice full of terror which was not altogether feigned.

Heedless of her cries, Peterio and Miguel hurried the captive to the large double tent of the physician, who was chief of the medical service in the Mexican army.

Dolores was thrust into the interior apartment of the tent, and Miguel stationed himself at the door to guard her.

The Spanish doctor seated himself before a large solar map, upon one corner of which the signs of the zodiac were painted, and having consulted it he arose and said to Miguel:

"The maiden must live until the moon reaches the sign of *Virgo*, the virgin."

"Yes, master."

"See that some of your men constantly guard my tent, so that she cannot escape."

"I will look to that."

Having thus received Miguel's assurance that the captive should be well guarded, the maniac physician left the tent.

As the doctor came out an old man in the garb of a guerilla, who had been listening at the entrance of the tent, turned quickly away.

The doctor did not seem to see him, and the old fellow sauntered away.

Reaching the confines of the encampment, he crept away through the tall prairie grass in a northerly direction.

Traveling in this way until the camp was lost to sight in the distance, the old man then arose and boldly hastened toward a coppice of mesquite upon the eastern bank of the river Neuces.

At the edge of the timber, concealed from the old man's sight, were three men whom we at once recognize to be Red Spear, Deaf Smith and Edward Marston.

Hugo the Texan is not among them.

The old ranger is absent upon an important mission.

The three scouts sight the approaching man.

They manifest no surprise.

"Hugo comes!" said Edward Marston.

"Yes," assented Red Spear.

Deaf Smith made a gesture significant of satisfaction.

"Now we shall have news of Dolores. In his disguise of a Mexican, Hugo was to enter the camp of Santa Anna and endeavor to find out where Dolores was confined, that we might attempt her rescue," said Marston.

"Yes," assented the Indian laconically.

In a few moments Hugo came up.

"Have you succeeded?" asked Marston, eagerly, as he grasped the old ranger's hand.

"I have found out all," answered Hugo.

"Good, and is there a chance that we may succeed in rescuing the girl?"

"There is of course a chance, but the risk is great. The tarnal skunks are in great force, and Dolores is confined in the tent of the Spanish doctor, almost in the center of the camp."

"Think you that the girl is in immediate danger of any harm?" asked Marston, anxiously.

"I listened at the entrance of Santa Anna's tent, and at that of the doctor, and from what I have gathered in that way I believe that the half-crazy old varmint, the doctor, means to sacrifice Dolores—to murder her with the maniacal belief in his mind that her blood will serve to perfect a compound the tarnal skunk has made to turn every-

thing into gold, he says. He's mad, mad as a March hare, is the old medical varmint," said Hugo.

"Then no time must be lost. I will rescue Dolores!" cried Marston, excitedly.

"You have not heard all. The old doctor will not sacrifice the girl until the moon is in the sign of the zodiac, called *Virgo*. The varmint has some insane notion that the influence of the heavenly bodies will aid his work as they influence the tides and the like, I reckon," said Hugo.

"Then we have yet time. The moon will not be in the sign mentioned for some days yet," said Marston.

Then the scouts consulted, and it was decided that they would that night make the first attempt to rescue Dolores, for in case of one failure they would then, it might be, have yet time to successfully accomplish their purpose.

But as they lay in the timber near the noonday hour, they saw the head of the Mexican army appear.

The entire force under Santa Anna was on the march.

They were on their way to the Alamo.

As the scouts saw more than sixteen hundred of their foes marching away across the prairie they were filled with forebodings.

Yet these brave men still clung to the hope that yet sustained the garrison of the Alamo, that Colonel Fanning would arrive from Goliad in time to save them.

"Our plan is now defeated I fear, for, as in this climate it is more comfortable for man and beast to journey by night, I apprehend that it is the purpose of the Mexicans to march all night. Still we will hang upon their trail, and if the opportunity offers we will snatch their girl captive from them," said Marston.

All the remainder of that day the scouts hung upon the flank of the moving army.

They, of course, kept well in the rear, and they did not even seek an engagement with the stragglers of the enemy's force, whom they might have defeated.

It was the purpose of Hugo and his friends to avoid betraying themselves.

Were the suspicions of the enemy once aroused that enemies were on their trail, the scouts apprehended that it was more than probable that the knowledge would induce them to take precautions of a nature that would render their design yet more difficult than at present.

The army of General Santa Anna marched all night.

Next day they encamped in the timber, and sent forward scouts in the direction of Alamo.

Deaf Smith and Red Spear could scarcely resist the temptation to attempt to cut off these fellows, and at last Marston gave consent, for Red Spear assured him that not one of the Mexican scouts—six in number—should escape to return to their camp.

Red Spear, Deaf Smith and Hugo set out after the Mexican scouts. Marston remained behind, and his friends agreed to rejoin him.

Three hours later they did so, and six Mexican scalps in the belt of the Comanche told that they had slain the scouts of the enemy.

That night Santa Anna's force remained in camp.

He was waiting for a supply train.

Between one and two o'clock the four American scouts set out for the enemy's camp.

They had determined to make the attempt to rescue Dolores, and they were all disguised in the clothing of the Mexicans they had slain that day, which Hugo had thoughtfully stripped from them.

They passed the sentinels and gained the tent of the Spanish doctor; but suddenly, as they crouched near it, a bright light flamed up in their faces, and two rifle-shots whistled by them.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SIEGE OF THE ALAMO—THE RETURN OF THE MESSENGER—DEAD WITHOUT SPEAKING—THE SCOUTS FAIL TO FIND DOLORES.

MEANWHILE the anxiety of the little garrison of the Alamo may better be imagined than described.

Their provisions were so scanty, that the prospect of withstanding a siege was rendered almost hopeless.

Still Davy Crockett, gallant Colonel Travis, and brave, reckless Bowie, strove to maintain the hopes and courage of their force.

Jack Thimblorig, whose identity is not clearly known, as the name Thimblorig was merely a nickname given him by Davy Crockett, developed into a brave soldier, although he had, as we have hinted, been a Mississippi gambler and sport.

On the twenty-second day of February, scouts from the Alamo brought in the information that the enemy was now within two or three miles of the fortress.

It was but a little after dawn on the following day, that the army of General Santa Anna came in sight.

The Mexicans advanced with wild yells, marching in regular order.

The enemy deployed upon the right and left, and the wings of each division formed a junction beyond the Alamo.

Thus the fortress of the Alamo was surrounded.

The devoted band of Americans within the fortress were hemmed in on every side.

A relentless and revengeful foe encircled them with a wall of death.

The Mexicans displayed a blood-red flag, which meant that they would show no quarter unless their terms were complied with, whatever those terms might be.

The Americans ran up the "Lone Star" flag.

It was the stars and stripes with an extra five-pointed white star of great size in the center.

The fortress of the Alamo is situated without the town of San Antonio or Bexar.

The Mexicans at once took possession of the town.

The same day a messenger with a flag of truce was sent to the Alamo by General Santa Anna.

In the name of the Mexican government he demanded an unconditional and absolute surrender of the garrison.

To this Colonel Travis replied:

"We will never surrender. We defend this post to the last."

"Then General Santa Anna desires me to say to you that every man of you shall be put to the sword," answered the Mexican.

At this moment Davy Crockett discharged a cannon shot from the battlements at the advance line of the enemy, and

at the same moment he shouted: "Be sure you're right then go ahead!"

A cheer went up from the little American garrison.

The drums beat, and Jack Thimblorig's clear, powerful voice burst out with a verse of a national song:

"While stars and stripes are flying
Our blood we'll freely shed;
No groan will 'scape the dying,
Seeing thee o'er his head—
Up with the banner, freedom."

Enthusiasm was at its height, and the messenger of Santa Anna departed, vowing vengeance upon the "accursed Americanos."

That night a messenger was sent to Colonel Fanning at Goliad, asking him to make all haste to the Alamo if he wished to save his countrymen from extermination.

It was a dangerous undertaking to attempt to make his way through the lines of the enemy.

Capture meant death, but the man who had volunteered to make his way to Goliad was an experienced scout, and he expressed his confidence in his ability to pass the enemy undetected.

For a long time after his departure Colonel Travis, Bowie, Davy Crockett and others remained on the parapet watching and waiting almost breathlessly, expecting that each moment the discharge of a gun from some one of the enemies outposts would inform them that the scout was discovered.

An hour elapsed, and as there was no alarm from the enemy, the people of the garrison were convinced that the messenger had safely passed the lines of the Mexican army.

This served to raise the spirits of all, and they turned in that night sustained by the old hope once more of receiving assistance from Goliad.

That night the enemy was busy, and in the morning the garrison discovered that they had thrown up a battery on the river bank.

The firing began almost immediately, but the aim of the Mexican gunners was not effectual.

Meanwhile Davy Crockett and other sharpshooters picked off the Mexicans continually.

All day long a straggling, irregular fire was kept up.

The following morning Colonel Bowie was taken ill, and could not leave his couch.

By this time the entire garrison had become very anxious about the fate of the four scouts who had gone in pursuit of Dolores, and Paul Davrill, the young girl's uncle, suffered greatly from suspense, and the fear that his beloved niece was lost to him forever.

That night the enemy made an attempt to cut off the water supply of the fort, and in the morning they advanced nearer the fort, but a portion of the enemy moved off in the direction of Goliad.

By March the third the besieged garrison gave up all hope of receiving assistance from Goliad.

Shells began to fall into the fort all the time now. Just at nightfall the lookout on the battlement of the Alamo saw a man dashing toward the fort, pursued by the Mexicans.

He was immediately recognized to be the scout who had gone to carry the news of the danger of the garrison of the Alamo to Colonel Fanning at Goliad.

The Mexican cavalry, numbering a dozen, were close upon the scout, and Davy Crockett, followed by three others, rushed from the fort to his assistance.

The cavalymen reached the scout before they were near enough to aid him, but he turned upon them, and with his clubbed rifle battled manfully.

A moment later, Crockett and his comrades were among the Mexican assailants of the brave scout.

The Mexicans took to their heels, but not before half their number had fallen.

The scout was fatally wounded, and Crockett and his friends carried him into the fort.

"Did you reach Goliad? Is Colonel Fanning coming to our aid?" asked Crockett, while the members of the garrison thronged about the dying scout, waiting for the answer which would decide their fate.

That answer never came.

The scout made an effort to speak, but a horrible change came upon his face, there was an inarticulate rattle in his throat, and he was dead.

Dead without having uttered a word. The garrison knew not whether he had reached Goliad or not.

It was now too late to send another messenger, and the dark cloud of despair settled down upon every heart.

Colonel Bowie dragged himself from his bed and addressed the men of the Alamo.

His words breathed the spirit of dauntless courage and desperate resolution.

"If we must die, let us fight to the last man, and make the victory of the enemy a bloody one for them," he said.

* * * * *

Let us now follow the fortunes of the four scouts who had entered the Mexican camp for the purpose of rescuing the girl captive, Dolores Davrill, from the maniac physician who meant to sacrifice her.

The light that suddenly flashed up in the faces of the four scouts, as they crouched near the entrance of the doctor's tent, was occasioned by the explosion of a hand-grenade flung by one of two guards who stood at the door of Doctor Peterio's shelter.

The guns of the two guards were then discharged.

But since the scouts were disguised, how was it that the guards were alarmed?

The answer is simple.

The maniac doctor had detected the four men lurking about his tent, and suspecting that Santa Anna was planning to deprive him of his girl captive, he had thought that it was probable that the four men were Santa Anna's emissaries.

The doctor crept near enough to hear their voices, and then he knew they were not Mexicans.

He communicated his discovery to the guards at the door of his tent.

The discharge of the guards' guns alarmed the camp.

But Edward Marston made a dash for the tent, and the others followed him.

They struck down the guards, and dashed into the doctor's tent.

They saw nothing of the girl they sought in the first apartment.

They then rushed into the second. That, too, was empty

as regarded the object of their search, but the maniac doctor was there.

"Gone—gone! Santa Anna has stolen her away!" the old man was shrieking.

The camp was now in a state of commotion, and the four scouts cut their way through the rear wall of the tent, and fled into the darkness.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONCLUSION.

UNDER cover of the darkness the four scouts escaped from the Mexican camp.

They hung upon the flank of the marching army next day.

The words they had heard uttered by the Spanish doctor convinced them that in some clandestine way Santa Anna had spirited the girl out of the old doctor's tent.

"I cannot imagine how the Mexican general can manage to keep the girl secreted from the old doctor in the camp, and yet he may do so. We must keep a bright lookout, for the wily Santa Anna may secretly send the girl under a guard to some stronghold of his beyond the Rio Grande," said Marston.

But although the scouts watched closely no one left the Mexican camp.

They were sure that the girl had been in the tent until but a few moments before their arrival, for the old doctor kept so close a watch over her that he would have missed her before he did, had she been long gone.

The scouts continued to follow the Mexicans on their march to the Alamo.

The night of the enemy's arrival at the fortress the scouts again entered the camp of Santa Anna.

But they could find no trace of Dolores.

Still they did not despair of rescuing her.

When the Alamo was surrounded, and it became evident that it must fall into the hands of the Mexicans unless help came, Red Spear was sent by Marston to Goliad to ask for aid.

But at that very time a portion of General Santa Anna's force was between the scouts and Goliad, and Red Spear had not advanced more than twenty miles in the direction of Goliad, which was distant about three days' march, when he was shot through the heart by a party of Mexican scouts, who lay in ambush at a ford which the Comanche was about to cross.

It was not until some time afterward that Marston learned of the brave warrior's fate.

The historian informs us that the final attack upon the Alamo was made on the night of the sixth of March.

The assault was made by the entire Mexican army, commanded by Santa Anna in person.

The fight raged until morning, when the Mexicans gained the interior of the Alamo, only to find six of the gallant Texans alive.

These men surrendered under the promise of protection, for further resistance was madness.

Davy Crockett was among the number who survived.

From the history of his life we quote the following:

"Crockett stood alone in an angle of the fort, the barrel of his shattered rifle in his right hand, in his left his huge bowie-knife dripping with blood. There was a frightful

gash across his forehead, while around him there was a complete barrier of about twenty Mexicans lying pell-mell, dead and dying. At his feet lay the dead body of that well-known character, designated by the name of Thimble-rig, his knife driven to the haft in the throat of a Mexican, and his left hand clutched his hair.

"Crockett was marched before Santa Anna with the other prisoners by General Castrillon, whose officers plunged their swords into the persons of the defenseless prisoners.

"Crockett, seeing this act of treachery, instantly sprang like a tiger at Santa Anna's throat; but before he could reach the chief of these 'demons of the Alamo,' a dozen swords were sheathed in his indomitable heart, and he fell dead."

Colonel Bowie, with characteristic bravery, fought to the last.

When the fort was taken, he was sick in his bed.

Lying in bed he discharged his pistol and gun, and with each discharge he brought an enemy to the ground.

Then, as the Mexicans advanced to his bedside, the dying Bowie nerved himself for a last blow, and plunged his knife into the heart of his nearest foe at the same instant that he expired.

Paul Davrill, Dolores' uncle, was shot dead early in the fight.

Hugo the Texan, Deaf Smith, and Marston during the battle, under cover of the darkness, constantly harassed the rear of the enemy with a galling fire, and did all in human power to aid their friends within the Alamo.

The day following the massacre of the Alamo, as Hugo the Texan was scouting about the Mexican camp, still in disguise, he heard a stifled scream from a covered wagon drawn up beside General Santa Anna's quarters, in a frame house in San Antonio village.

Dolores Davrill lay upon the floor of the wagon, while over her stood Angelo Peterio, the Spanish doctor, with a gleaming knife in his hand.

The physician had placed the head of the girl in a large metallic vessel, and as he waved his murderous-looking knife over the girl's head, he hissed:

"Ha, ha! Santa Anna, I have found where you have kept my captive secreted so long from me; but now my time has come. The moon is in the sign of *Virgo*, and now will I have the blood of this maiden to mingle with the subtle fluids from which the wondrous compound to transform all metallic substances to gold is made."

As he uttered these words the maniac raised his knife; but before the weapon fell upon the fair throat of Dolores Hugo leaped into the wagon, and with one blow he struck the Spanish doctor to the floor, rendering him insensible.

Then he bound and gagged the maniac, and immediately released Dolores.

In a few words he informed the girl who he was, and she told him that on the march, from the night when he was in the doctor's tent, she had been hidden in the wagon which was supposed to contain Santa Anna's private baggage.

Hugo knew it would be impossible to escape from the town with the girl by daylight, and he therefore promised to make an attempt in her behalf during the coming night.

Dolores had been assigned an apartment in the house

occupied by Santa Anna as his head-quarters, but he had been so constantly engaged that he had not as yet attempted to molest her.

She had repaired to the baggage-wagon to procure some of her belongings when the doctor had surprised her, knocked her senseless, and secured her as Hugo found her.

Hugo, as he turned to leave the wagon, examined the body of the Spanish doctor, for a deathly pallor had come upon the fallen man's face.

"He is dead. My blow killed him," the ranger said a moment later.

Such was the fact.

Dolores fled from the presence of the dead, and Hugo, after removing the doctor's bonds, left the wagon.

That day Deaf Smith, Hugo and Marston visited the interior of the Alamo which the Mexicans had deserted, and there, in sight of the bodies of the brave Texans who had been mercilessly slaughtered, they vowed vengeance.

When night came they repaired to the house in which Dolores was supposed to be.

Dolores met her lover and his friend at the rear wall of the garden that surrounded the house, and the reunited ones, mounted upon good horses which they had taken from the Mexicans, struck across the country for the headquarters of General Sam Houston, at New Washington.

They arrived at that point in safety, and told the story of the battle of the Alamo and the massacre of the defenseless prisoners who had surrendered.

General Houston swore vengeance, and placing Dolores with the family of a relative where she would be in safety, Edward Marston, Deaf Smith, and Hugo the Texan, joined Houston's army that they might have a chance to meet "the demons of the Alamo" on the battle-field.

On the eighteenth day of April Santa Anna marched in the direction of Lynch Ferry, on the San Jacinto, and on the morning of the nineteenth General Houston marched to meet the tyrant.

Santa Anna's force numbered fifteen hundred men, and General Houston had but about seven hundred and eighty in his entire command.

Before noon the Texans were in sight of the enemy, and after burning the bridge on the only road communicating with the Brazos, at about four o'clock in the afternoon the Texans attacked the Mexicans with great fury, and their battle-cry was "Remember the Alamo!"

The Mexicans fled in every direction. The rout began at half-past four and continued until twilight.

Of the Americans, there were in the battle two killed and twenty-three wounded.

The Mexicans sustained a loss of six hundred and thirty killed, and seven hundred and thirty were taken prisoners. Among the prisoners was General Santa Anna himself.

On condition that his life was spared Santa Anna evacuated Texas and acknowledged the independence of that State.

The massacre of the Alamo was avenged, and the demons who perpetrated it were slain or driven across the Rio Grande.

When peace came, Edward Marston and Dolores were united for life.

[THE END.]

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